

REMARKS

Thorough examination and careful review of the application by the Examiner is noted and appreciated.

Claims 5 and 14 are objected to as being depending upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten into independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, is further noted and appreciated.

Independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended to further incorporate the limitations contained in dependent claims 5 and 14, respectively.

Claims 1-3, 5-12 and 14-20 are pending in the application. Claims 1-3, 6-12 and 15-20 stand rejected.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §102

Claims 1-3, 6-12, 15 and 17-20 are rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Khandros '214. It is contended that Khandros discloses in Fig. 15 a stem region 46 and a tip region 35 having the claimed diameter/radius.

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Independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended to further incorporate the limitations contained in dependent claims 5 and 14, respectively. Claims 5 and 14 have been cancelled and require no further consideration by the Examiner. The Applicants respectfully submit that the newly amended independent claims 1 and 11 are in condition for allowance, as suggested by the Examiner. A reconsideration for allowance of claims 1 and 11, and their dependent claims 2-3, 6-10, 12, 15 and 17-20, is respectfully requested of the Examiner.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §103

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Khandros.

Claim 16 depends on the newly amended independent claim 11, which is believed to be allowable. The Applicants respectfully submit that claim 16 is therefore likewise allowable. A reconsideration for allowance of claim 16 is respectfully requested of the Examiner.

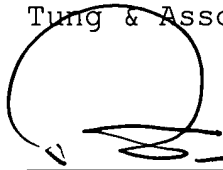
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Based on the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims, i.e. claims 1-4, 6-13 and 15-20, are now in condition for allowance. Such favorable action by the Examiner at an early date is respectfully solicited.

In the event that the present invention is not in a condition for allowance for any other reasons, the Examiner is respectfully invited to call the Applicants' representative at his Bloomfield Hills, Michigan office at (248) 540-4040 such that necessary action may be taken to place the application in a condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

Tung & Associates

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Randy W. Tung', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large loop at the beginning and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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